

# The Semaphore

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Issue 231

Fall 2020

THE NEW NORMAL

# KIDS CORNER

by Sarah Kliban  
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Welcome to our second installment of Kids Corner! The four kids interviewed here range in age and schools but are all from the neighborhood.



**SIMONNE “Cobra” ALDEN, 8**

*If you could start a business in our neighborhood, what would it be?*

“An art studio. It would offer paintings and art pieces. Like a museum. With art from Frida Kahlo and my art. Kids’ art and art from famous artists. There would be a button maker and people could draw their own design and put it on the buttons. I think it should be called ‘Twig Art Store’ because my favorite doll is named ‘Twig.’”

*What do you think our neighborhood will look like in 100 years?*

“Probably robots flying around. The cars will have no wheels and fly around. The buildings would float up. The library would actually look like a book. There are probably going to be like fancy cats and dogs walking around.”

*If you could time travel, would you rather go to the past, or the future?*

“The past. Because there’d be old-timey clothes, and you’d get to walk to school in dresses and have school uniforms. I’d like to live with my great-great grandma Hilda. I’d like to see all the old art stores and fashion stores and flower shops.”

**COLETTE MAYERSKY, 9**

*If you could start a business in our neighborhood, what would it be?*

“A small candy shop. That would be fun. It would probably be called ‘Colette’s Sweet Shop.’ We would have candies that everyone would like—kids *and* adults. Maybe candy the adults would have had when they were kids. We could also have special or unusual candies that you don’t normally see nowadays. We could have a little section of candies from all over the world.”

*What do you think our neighborhood will look like in 100 years?*



“Our neighborhood has a lot of Victorian old buildings. I would hope there would still be some there, but some of the architecture might change. It might become more modern which is sad because the old Victorian architecture is beautiful. Small apartments like ours will probably get turned into something really big—like condos. I assume there will be a few left of these old buildings.”

*If you could time travel, would you rather go to the past, or the future?*

“I feel like the future would be cool, but, actually, I’d like to go in the past to see what it was like before I was born. I don’t want to go back super-far, maybe 1940. Or I could check out the 1950s or 1960s because that was a very interesting time. I think their style was kind of cool. And everyone’s realizing that women can do anything. Those years go by, and people finally start realizing things.”



**MASON GEMMILL, 13**

*If you could start a business in our neighborhood, what would it be?*

“Probably *not* another restaurant. I’d probably open up something that people would want to go to. We don’t have very many specialty shops because a lot of them get kicked out because of the higher rents. Maybe a hobby shop. I’ve always wanted there to be something like that. It would have models, toys, whatever. There would have to be plastic models. Those are always fun to make. North Beach Collectibles.”

*What do you think our neighborhood will look like in 100 years?*

“I think we will no longer have all these smaller houses, and it will just be a lot of apartment buildings. It’s not going to be as nice and quaint as it is right now. It’s going to be sad. I like it this way—but more and more people are moving here. I don’t know how long ago Crystal Towers was built, but to be honest, it’s kind of an eyesore. There will be a lot more apartment buildings like that. And the price for a house will be very, very high.

Probably New York City apartment building-high with inflation. It’s hard to say how much that would be.”

*If you could time travel, would you rather go to the past, or the future?*

“I’d probably choose the past. I don’t know what the future holds, but it would be cool to go into the past and see what it was like. Maybe the early 40s because I enjoy learning about WWII. It would be kinda cool to be there and experience what it was like.”



**SIBANI SHAH, 7**

*If you could start a business in our neighborhood, what would it be?*

“A kids’ hospital. Then, all the kids could get their checkups in the neighborhood and wouldn’t have to go far away. They could just walk here to get their shots. North Beach Kids Hospital. I would be a nurse, and if something happened to a kid, they could call me, and I’d get the checkup ready. We would check the ears and eyes.”

*What do you think our neighborhood will look like in 100 years?*

“In a hundred years, the neighborhood will look bigger and better. In a hundred years, the law would change and say, ‘If you cut down a tree, you have to plant a new one.’ Because the earth used to be all green! People just kept cutting down trees. North Beach would be full of trees. There could be new shops opening or new hospitals or maybe even a toy shop.”

*If you could time travel, would you rather go to the past, or the future?*

“Sometime in the future. Maybe 2024. I want to see what it’s going to be like then and what will happen and how much taller I will be. Maybe even what our house would be like in 4 years.”

For suggestions or comments, please e-mail us at [kids@thd.org](mailto:kids@thd.org).





## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Stan Hayes  
President@thd.org

What a year. There's never been one like this. I woke up one morning recently with the sky so dark with smoke it seemed like nighttime. They used to say, "red skies in the morning, sailors take warning." Not sure about orange skies.

Life on the Hill is different, at least for now. Here we are, mid-stream in a global pandemic, economic unease, national moral reckoning, and, as of this writing, California firestorms, yet again. Everyone is anxious about something—health, bills, jobs, rent.

What to have for dinner. Where to get take-out. How to Zoom. What background to use. Not to mention hair anxiety and the thrill of the first haircut in months.

If nothing else in 2020, we've learned resilience. And, renewed community. Especially when it comes to caring for each other. Streets have transformed into outdoor restaurants, neighborhoods have mobilized to care for neighbors in need, crowd generosity harnessed by crowdfunding has saved lives and livelihoods, volunteers have donated mega-hours to untold health- and help-giving services, and new virtual and non-virtual resources have sprung up to alleviate the needs of so many.

We're all pulling together. We should be proud as a community. This is the way it's supposed to work. We could have faced a future overwhelmed by fear, mistrust, and isolation. Instead we're building a future flush with confidence, trust, and community. Great job, folks!

This is what THD is here for, too. Building community, nurturing and safeguarding neighborhoods. Helping each other. Making North Beach, Telegraph Hill, and the Northeast Waterfront a better place. For 66 years, since 1954.

Speaking about THD, here are some of the things we've been up to since the last issue.

**Virtual Annual Meeting.** In an ordinary year, THD holds its Annual Meeting in April. But this year has been anything but ordinary. Given the COVID-19 crisis, we've been delaying our Annual Meeting until safe and permissible to get together again in person. That doesn't look like it's going to happen anytime soon, though.

So, by the time you read this, you'll already know that we decided to go ahead online with a Virtual Annual Meeting on October 13. (Hope you were able to attend!) Though the meeting itself has not yet occurred at the time of this writing, here's what we wish

will have happened.

We hope that the meeting will have been a big success via Zoom, with many members participating. Carl Nolte, legendary journalist and "Native Son" columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle* will have been the featured speaker. Supervisor Aaron Peskin will have announced THD's 2020 Outstanding Contribution to the Hill Award. (Of course, we can't yet reveal who that outstanding person will be!)

And, the annual election for THD officers and directors will have been held. (Stay tuned for more on this in the next *Semaphore*.) And, members having voted on the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee. With the delay necessitated this year, officers and directors for 2019-2020 have continued their service in place pending this annual meeting, for which we are grateful. The Nominating Committee has recommended that these same officers and directors be elected for 2020-2021, serving until the next annual meeting in 2021.

**First Fridays.** In another strong and welcome sign of the reawakening of North Beach from months of business shutdowns, North Beach First Fridays was back on September 4, for just the second time since the City's shelter-in-place began in March. To spur foot traffic and help struggling businesses, parts of upper Grant Avenue and Green Street were closed for much of that day, enabling pedestrian use, at least temporarily. A big thanks to North Beach Business Association (NBBA) president Danny Macchiarini and Romalyn Schmaltz, North Beach First Fridays coordinator and THD board member. THD board and members were pleased to join in as volunteers, monitoring traffic barricades and encouraging proper distancing and mask protocols, among other things. Look for First Fridays the first Friday of every month.

**Virtual District 3 Supervisor Debate.** With this year's City elections close upon us, THD organized and joined with NEXT Village, NBBA, North Beach Neighbors, and Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association to sponsor an online District 3 Supervisor Debate on September 23. Three candidates participated: Supervisor Aaron Peskin, Danny Sauter, and Spencer Simonsen. Trisha Thadani, City Hall Reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, moderated. The debate was spirited, with an online audience of more than 500 people participating virtually.

**Online THD Event Series.** As you might recall, THD has sponsored a Virtual Event series over the past several months. We have now added recordings of all these live events to our website at [thd.org/event-series](http://thd.org/event-series). Featured speakers include well-known San Francisco

author and journalist David Talbot in conversation with KPFA's Rose Aguilar on May 21, Supervisor Aaron Peskin in conversation with *Mission Local's* managing editor Joe Eskenazi on June 25, and former Assembly member and San Francisco Supervisor Tom Ammiano in conversation with 48 Hills editor Tim Redmond. Enjoy!

**Walking the Historic District.** For your near-home enjoyment, THD has added to its website at [thd.org/history](http://thd.org/history), a self-guided walking tour of the Telegraph Hill Historic District. Both a map and instructions are available for download. A big thanks to former THD President Joe Luttrell and current THD Vice President Nancy Shanahan for preparing this excellent (and pandemically-appropriate) walking tour!

Remember, to join or to get information about THD, come to our website at [thd.org](http://thd.org), or send an email to [helo@thd.org](mailto:helo@thd.org). If you'd like to get involved, just go to [www.thd.org/member-info](http://www.thd.org/member-info).



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## COVER ART CONTEST FOR KIDS

Calling all artists! *The Semaphore* is looking for art from our neighborhood kids. The winning submission will be used on the cover of the Winter issue, and an interview with the winner will appear. The top five runners-up will have their work featured inside the issue. Pending social restrictions and rules, we are hoping to feature the top 10 submissions in one of our local neighborhood storefronts.

**This year's theme: WHY OUR NEIGHBORHOOD IS SPECIAL**

### Contest RULES:

- You must be between the ages of 4 and 14 and live in North Beach/Telegraph Hill.
- Your artwork must be original and done just by you.
- You can use any type of visual medium (digital, paint, pen, photo, etc.).
- Send a scan of your work to [kids@thd.org](mailto:kids@thd.org), including your name, age, brief description of your artwork, and a photo of yourself holding your artwork.
- Images should be 8 x 11 (or close) and scanned to 300dpi – as jpg, tif, or pdf.
- Your parent or guardian has to send an email to [kids@thd.org](mailto:kids@thd.org), giving THD permission for your name, photo, and artwork to be published in *The Semaphore* and online.

Important DATES:

Contest begins November 1, 2020

Deadline for submissions: December 1, 2020

Questions? Contact [kids@thd.org](mailto:kids@thd.org).



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## PARKS & TREES REPORT

by Don Raichle, Committee Chair  
don.raichle@thd.org

Christopher Columbus no longer stands atop Telegraph Hill. From where he previously looked north to the Bay from his perch below Coit Tower, only a concrete block remains. Following the George Floyd protests and subsequent multiple vandalizations to the sculpture, Mayor London Breed determined that it was time for the statue to come down.

Initially erected in 1957 as a symbol of pride by the Italian-American community, its presence became controversial as Columbus' role in history was reevaluated and seen in a darker light. Now the sculpture sits in storage, a void in his place.

While not as defining to the Park as Coit Tower, this prominent location, if addressed, could influence the Park's character. It might seem to be an overstatement, but just as the Columbus statue reinforced North Beach as being the "Italian" neighborhood, how this location is treated will reflect current local and citywide priorities and attitudes.

A brief look back at how the Park has changed over the years illustrates Pioneer Park's varied personas over time. Past dominant features have included the original semaphore tower, remodeled into a telegraph station in 1850 and later destroyed by a storm in winter 1870/71. Subsequently, the land was purchased by George Hearst and donated to the City as a park in 1876. Pioneer Park was born.



1884 Telegraph Hill Observatory

COURTESY WESTERN NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT, OPENSFHistory.ORG, WPN26.659

The next dominant structure was the castle-like Telegraph Hill Observatory, destroyed by fire in 1903. For the next two decades, the Park was a relatively treeless cap to the Hill that visitors would climb to enjoy the 360-degree view of San Francisco and the Bay. In the 1920s, Telegraph Hill Boulevard was constructed, providing the car route and parking area we know today and, in so doing, creating the small planting circle that eventually became the site of the Columbus statue.

Once accessed by cars, the Park began to take on a more developed character. The parking lot and observation area were initially defined by a simple railing that eventually became a formal balustrade, somewhat famously featured as the arrival court to Nora Charles' mansion in *After the Thin Man*. The next big change was construction of Coit Tower in 1933, the planting of the Hill's signature Monterey Cypress trees, and installation of the formal concrete seating terraces surrounding the lot's perimeter. This is the Pioneer Park we currently know. (For a detailed visual exploration of the Park's evolution, the Western Neighborhoods



1895 Telegraph Hill

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# THE CONTINUING EVOLUTION OF PIONEER PARK



1933 The newly constructed Coit Tower

COURTESY WESTERN NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT, OPENSFHistory.ORG, WPN27.4692

Project website, [OpenSFHistory.org](https://www.opensfhistory.org), has an extensive library of historic photos of Telegraph Hill and all of San Francisco.)

Fast forward to today: The Park has been going through a much needed and partially completed facelift.



1926 Looking up the North Slope of Pioneer Park

COURTESY WESTERN NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT, OPENSFHistory.ORG, WPN14.0102



1945 Arrival Court

COURTESY WESTERN NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT, OPENSFHistory.ORG, WPN25.5949

The Cypress trees had become overgrown and, in many cases, unhealthy safety hazards blocking the famous panoramic view from the Hill's crest. In recent years, these trees and others in the Park were pruned and, in some cases, removed so that those remaining could regain their health and frame views instead of obscuring them.

The lawn terrace on the Park's south side has been restored and stairs added to access the Park from the west. These improvements have enhanced the Park's appearance; however, more work remains. New understory planting is needed where trees were removed on the Park's steep northern slope, and some trees still

await pruning. While budgets are clearly tight during the Covid-impacted times we now live in, at a minimum planning to address these outstanding tasks requires completion. The slope planting, in particular, should be designed and scheduled.

The one component of the Park that will have to be addressed is what to do with the former site of the Christopher Columbus statue. Suggestions have included a Lillie Hitchcock Coit statue in honor of her donation of Coit Tower, relocation of the Fireman's Memorial Statue now located in Washington Square Park, commission of a new art installation, or simply leaving the circle as a planted garden feature as it was between the 1920s and 1957. A decision won't be easy, given the number of stakeholders. The actual land is part of the Greenwich Street right-of-way, so the Department of Public Works will be involved. The Recreation and Parks Department has jurisdiction over the Park. The neighborhood clearly will have a say, and several local groups including THD and the Friends of Pioneer Park are currently following the ongoing discussions. In the end, a new art installation would need to go through the San Francisco Arts Commission following a recommendation from the Visual Arts Subcommittee. The obvious conclusion is that nothing will happen soon, but the process can't be ignored, lest the result be extremely disappointing.

THD will continue to work with all parties involved and keep members posted on any progress, communicating opportunities where public input can be most impactful. While not as heavily used as Washington Square Park or as magical as the Filbert Steps, Pioneer Park has a significant impact on the Hill's identity and quality of life. How it evolves must be responsive to the neighborhood.



1960 Christopher Columbus presides over Arrival Court

COURTESY WESTERN NEIGHBORHOODS PROJECT, OPENSFHistory.ORG, WPN27.5147





## DISTRICT 3 SUPERVISOR REPORT

by Supervisor Aaron Peskin  
aaron.peskin@sfgov.org

2020 has been one struggle after another, seemingly without an end in sight. A global pandemic and economic shutdown, California ablaze with wildfires, a national reckoning with racism, and a dysfunctional federal administration openly fanning the flames of hatred. On the first night of Rosh Hashanah, the news of Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg's passing was just another gut punch to our collective will to hold on.

But that's what our resilient community does in times of struggle: We hold on, and we take care of each other. And we fight for change, including at the ballot box. This is the most critical election in generations, and we have an opportunity to vote for recovery and reforms from Washington, D.C. to San Francisco.

### SAN FRANCISCO

Here's a brief description of the most important local ballot measures and my recommendations.

#### Prop A (Health & Recovery Bond)—YES.

This \$487 million bond, supported unanimously by the Board of Supervisors and Mayor, will fund mental health and supportive housing facilities and street repair and park renovations, including Portsmouth Square – and will *not* raise property taxes or increase rents.

#### Prop B (Department of Public Works Reform)—YES.

Corruption has tragically plagued DPW from its trash can contracts to its ineffective street cleaning, necessitating reform and restructuring. This Charter Amendment splits DPW's core functions into two separate departments: Public Works and Sanitation/Streets and, for the first time, creates public, transparent, oversight Commissions with annual performance and spending audits.

#### Prop C (Remove Citizenship Requirements from City Commissions' Service)—YES.

This Charter Amendment would allow non-citizens to serve on city boards, commissions, and advisory bodies, encouraging diversity and engagement on the local issues that affect us all, regardless of our immigration status. My staffer, Sarah Souza, is a DACA recipient, immigrant rights leader, and Co-Chair of this ballot measure, which I'm proud to support.

#### Prop D (Sheriff's Department Oversight)—YES.

This Charter Amendment creates the Sheriff's

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Department Oversight Board to report findings and advise the Sheriff and the Board of Supervisors regarding Department operations on a quarterly basis; it creates the Sheriff's Department Office of Inspector General to investigate complaints of non-criminal misconduct by Department employees and contractors. This is one piece of a larger effort to implement reasonable law enforcement reforms.

#### Prop E (Needs-Based Police Staffing)—YES.

Another reasonable law enforcement reform, unanimously supported by the Board of Supervisors, this Charter Amendment replaces the arbitrarily-mandated minimum police staffing requirement with an independent, fact-based analysis of actual sworn officer needs.

#### Prop F (Fair Recovery Tax Overhaul & Small Business Relief)—YES.

This business tax overhaul finally repeals our payroll tax, increases small business exemptions to include businesses making up to \$2 million annually, and right-sizes the top business tax tiers to ensure that those entities making the most pay their fair share to support essential public infrastructure and services. Prop F is another critical recovery measure supported unanimously by the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor that gives sorely-needed relief to small businesses and cost-sensitive industries impacted by the pandemic.

#### Prop G (Youth Voting Eligibility)—YES.

This measure authorizes youths aged 16 and 17 to vote in municipal elections. It narrowly lost at the polls in 2016. I supported this measure then after my former Youth Commissioner presented compelling research and arguments at a joint session with the Board of Supervisors. And, I'm supporting it now. When people start voting early, they're more likely to vote for the rest of their lives.

#### Prop I (Real Estate Transfer Tax)—YES.

This measure, which is heavily opposed by the wealthiest corporations and real estate investment trusts in our country, would increase the transfer tax rate to 5.5% on property sales valued between \$10 and \$25 million, and 6% on transfers of properties with a value of \$25 million or more. The lead sponsor, Supervisor Dean Preston, intends the proceeds to go toward citywide rent and mortgage relief in the aftermath of COVID-19.

#### Prop J (San Francisco Unified School District Parcel Tax to Fund Teachers)—YES.

This measure replaces the annual \$320 parcel tax in 2018's "Living Wage for Educators Act" (Prop G) and replaces it with a lesser \$288 annual parcel tax to be spent by SFUSD for sorely-needed teacher pay raises. Supported by 60.8% of the electorate in 2018, imple-

mentation of the measure has been held up by litigation brought by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

#### Prop K (Affordable Housing Authorization)—YES.

This measure allows the City of San Francisco to own, develop, construct, acquire, or rehabilitate up to 10,000 affordable rental units in San Francisco required under Article 34, an antiquated provision of the California Constitution.

#### Prop L (Overpaid CEO Tax)—YES.

Prop L imposes a business tax on companies in which the highest-paid managerial employee makes 100 times more than the median San Francisco employee salary. It is fair and is designed to stop corporations from paying their CEOs multiple millions.

#### Prop RR (Caltrain Regional Sales Tax)—YES.

Supervisor Shamann Walton and I co-sponsored this county sales tax of 0.125% to fund critical Caltrain rail service and infrastructure while also ensuring long overdue oversight and governance reforms for this three-county railroad that connects San Jose to San Francisco. The same exact measure is also on the ballot in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties and will ensure a stable source of revenue for this environmentally-sound transportation system.

### CALIFORNIA

A brief spotlight on the most important state measures:

#### Prop 15 (Schools & Communities First Act)—YES.

This voter sponsored measure would require commercial and industrial properties be taxed based on their real market value. By closing antiquated corporate tax loopholes, California will be able to reinvest billions of dollars into our schools, teachers, and community services.

#### Prop 21 (Expand Local Rent Control in California)—YES.

As a small landlord who supports rent control and has seen firsthand how this tool has helped keep my constituents in their homes (particularly our most vulnerable workers and seniors living on a fixed income), I support Proposition 21. This initiative would allow California cities to adopt reasonable expansions of local rent control protections for tenants. We must keep our neighbors in their homes during this crisis and beyond.

#### Prop 22 (Lyft & Uber Measure to Undo Worker Protections)—NO.

Despite a recent state law (AB5) and court rulings that affirm that gig workers are employees (not "independent contractors") who have rights to health care and other protections, serial "disrupters" like Uber, Lyft, DoorDash, and Instacart are spending almost \$200 million to deceive voters and dismantle hard-fought labor laws by replacing them with their own exclusive rules. In my opinion, it is unacceptable to allow them to buy this election and harm workers and consumers. For all the money they are spending disseminating lies, they could just pay their workers a living wage.

Thanks for taking the time to read through this election run-down. The work doesn't stop at the ballot, though. So, I hope to have your vote for my fourth and final term as your District 3 Supervisor—I'm ready to tackle the challenges of the next four years head on. To learn more about what our office has been working on since the start of the pandemic, please visit <https://sfbos.org/supervisor-peskin>.

Hang in there and stay safe,  
Aaron



MetalworksSF is now enrolling for the winter session with Covid prevention precautions in place! Sign up at [METALWORKSSF.COM](https://METALWORKSSF.COM)

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# O BROTHER, WHERE ART THOU?

by Mark Bittner

In the early spring of 1974, when I was 22, I lost my last bit of shelter and was cast out onto the streets of North Beach. I had no money, no ID and didn't know anyone in the neighborhood. Before getting the boot, I'd been in a fragile psychological state, so the streets felt particularly dangerous. I was in a near constant panic.

One day while searching for food along Fisherman's Wharf, I was approached by another homeless man. He was in his early 30s, short, balding, and a little chubby. I'd seen him rooting through a garbage can just a few minutes earlier. I avoided other street people, fearing that fraternization might lead to permanent homelessness. He insisted on talking but said little that I could comprehend. He had some mental damage. The only thing I understood was that he'd once been a jazz trumpet player. I thought of jazz musicians as playing pure music—that is, music without any commercial considerations whatsoever. One of the things I was struggling with internally was my own recent attempt at playing pure music. It had often seemed to me that people who tried to make a deep connection with the muse were ultimately destroyed by her, and now, standing before me, was possibly evidence of the truth of that. I turned and ran away. It took me days to convince myself that my soul had not been eternally damned.

Today, 46 years later, that homeless man is still alive, still scavenging from garbage cans. He has, if nothing else, incredible endurance. Four years ago, I was talking to a longtime resident of North Beach who knew I was working on a book about my time on the street. He would tell me stories about some of the neighborhood's older, marginal characters, and on this particular day, he mentioned a jazz trumpet player he once knew who was still out there. It was the same guy. (I'll call him 'Chet.') Most of us, myself included, tend to regard the homeless as phantoms, people without a past, so it felt strange to know the man's name. An hour later, on the off chance I might find something, I researched his name on the Internet.

Surprisingly, I came up with something right away—a page for his high school class reunion, where he was listed as deceased. There was a photo of him playing the trumpet and a sidebar that included words



Patrick following Chet.

© MARK BITTNER

from a sibling who said Chet had probably died in the early 1970s in San Francisco. Figuring she'd want to know her brother was still alive, I wrote his sister. Her immediate assumption was that I was some kind of perverse con man playing a sick game. So, I took some photos and sent them to her.

Neither parent was alive, but all of his siblings, four brothers and a sister, were. Interestingly, his mother had insisted to her dying day that Chet was still alive, too. The news that he really was sent a shock wave through the family, but they lived nearly 2,000 miles away, and none of them were well off. No one knew what to do.

I didn't think there was anything they could do. I'd tried to speak to him, but Chet lived in his own world. He seemed unable to speak. When I offered him shoes and cigarettes, he vehemently shook his head "no." He got his food and clothing out of garbage cans.

Curious about his past, I located some of his old friends, two from his adolescence and some others from his days in North Beach. He'd been a talented musician and painter. He used to play Bop City, a club in the Fillmore, which was a very demanding gig. You were not allowed on the stage unless you were a strong player. But something was happening inside Chet that pushed him toward the street. On a visit back home, he shocked his mother by telling her that he wanted to be a hermit. I think he finally landed on the street a few months before I did.

I stayed in touch with the family, reporting on Chet's condition, which was always the same. He never seemed to get sick. He was in his late 70s now and spent his days searching through local garbage cans. Then, last summer, I got a message from one of his brothers. (I'll call him 'Patrick.') Patrick was coming to San Francisco and wanted to see Chet.

Patrick and I hit it off immediately. We were the same age, and he was a rock and roll bass player. Over lunch, we told each other what we knew about Chet. We stopped to pick up Judy at her office, and the three of us headed off in search of him. He has a reliable routine, so it didn't take long to find him. Patrick had been nervous about how to approach him.

He didn't know what to say and wondered if it would feel too weird to carry out his mission. But the moment we saw Chet, all of Patrick's reluctance vanished. He sat down right next to his brother and started talking to him.

The response was pretty much what I expected. Chet stood up, shook his head "no" and walked away. He's a strong walker, even though he's approaching 80 and shuffles along in beat-up shoes. We had to work to keep up with him. We followed him around the neighborhood for about an hour, sometimes down the middle of the street, while Patrick tried to engage his brother with constant banter. But Chet ignored him and kept waving him away. The two brothers had not seen each other in 50 years, and Chet is extremely myopic—probably legally blind. He's probably hard of hearing, too. So, he had no idea who was following him.

It's difficult to describe his lack of presence in this world. While the whole thing was sad—Patrick had traveled a long way to make contact—he could see a strange humor in the situation and cracked an occasional joke. He kept talking to his brother as Judy and I tagged along and took photographs. But Chet was clearly feeling harassed, so eventually we decided to let him be.

Two days later, I got a phone call from Patrick who told me he'd gone back on his own for one more visit. It was the same. He followed Chet around and kept talking to him, until finally he gave up. Before heading back to his hotel room, he told Chet, "I'll probably never see you again, but I love you, brother."



First meeting.

© JUDY IRVING



Chet scavenging for food.

© MARK BITTNER



# HONORING OUR NORTH BEACH LEGACY BUSINESSES

by Nancy Shanahan  
nancy.shanahan@thd.org

During these unprecedented times when so many of our cherished small North Beach businesses are struggling to survive, we take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the long-term enterprises that have contributed so much to our neighborhood's history and identity. Some, including *Fior d'Italia*, started in 1886 at the corner of Union and Stockton Streets where Original Joe's now stands, *The Northstar Café*, dating from 1882, *The Saloon*, first opening its doors in 1861, and *Molinari Delicatessen*, established in 1896, even survived the 1906 earthquake and fire and were able to rebuild their businesses, continuing to serve our residents and visitors today.

While so many North Beach restaurants, bars, and shops deserve our recognition and support especially during these challenging times, a significant number of our long-lasting, historic businesses have received special recognition by their inclusion on the City's Legacy Business Registry. Others have been nominated and are currently in the process for listing on the Registry.

The San Francisco Legacy Business Registry was created by the Board of Supervisors in March 2015 officially to recognize small businesses as historic assets—not just the buildings that house them—and to provide them with some protection. To be eligible, a business must be 30 years or older, contributed to its neighborhood's history, and agree to maintain its identity, historic name, and craft. Before a business can be listed, a member of the Board of Supervisors or the mayor must nominate it, and, in hearings before the Historic Preservation and Small Business Commissions, the business must show that it has made a significant contribution to the history and culture of its neighborhood.

To provide meaningful support for these businesses, voters passed Proposition J in November 2015, establishing a Legacy Business Preservation Fund to extend financial incentives to those on the Registry. Included are Rent Stabilization Grants to landlords who extend the leases of a Legacy Business and Business Assistance Grants to the business based on its number of employees. Even in these difficult times of City budget shortfalls, the Rent Stabilization Grants are available.

The North Beach neighborhood is celebrated for its historic character and independent small businesses. In North Beach alone, at least 35 (more than in any other neighborhood in the City) have been nominated to the Legacy Business Registry by District 3 Supervisor Aaron Peskin. As the following list shows, these nominations and their subsequent listing on the Registry represent the wide diversity of our neighbor-



Tommaso's Restaurant at 1042 Kearny. In 1971, the Cantalupo family turned over its 1935 restaurant (left ) to its longtime chef, Tommy, who changed the name from Lupo's to Tommaso's. COMPLIMENTS OF TOMMASO'S

hood's historic establishments. More than ever, these beloved North Beach survivors need the neighborhood's support for their continued existence.



Gino & Carlo at 548 Green has been a local watering hole since 1942. Sodini's Green Valley Restaurant, in the foreground at 510 Green, served its first Italian meals in 1906. © CAREN ZISSON COLOR

- Businesses on the Legacy Business Registry:**
- Caffe Sapore* (1996) formerly at 790 Lombard Street, now relocating following eviction
  - Caffe Sport* (1969) at 574 Green Street
  - Caffe Trieste* (1956) at 601 Vallejo Street
  - Cole Hardware* (1920s) at 627 Vallejo Street
  - Columbus Cafe* (1936) at 562 Green Street
  - Canessa Gallery* (building: 1893; gallery: 1966) at 708 Montgomery Street
  - City Lights Booksellers and Publishers* (1953) at 261 Columbus Avenue
  - Gino & Carlo* (1942) at 548 Green Street
  - Gypsy Rosalie's Wigs and Vintage* (1960) at 1457 Powell Street
  - La Rocca's Corner* (1934) at 957 Columbus Avenue
  - Liguria Bakery* (1911) at 1700 Stockton Street
  - Macchiarini Creative Design & Metalworks* (1948) at 1544 Grant Avenue
  - Mario's Bohemian Cigar Store* (1971) at 566 Columbus Avenue
  - Mr. Bing's* (1967) at 201 Columbus Avenue
  - The Northstar Cafe* (1882) at 1560 Powell Street
  - Original Joe's* (1937) at 601 Union Street
  - Original U.S. Restaurant* (late 1890s) at 414 Columbus Avenue, formerly at 431 Columbus Avenue, then at 515 Columbus Avenue
  - Pier 23 Café Restaurant & Bar* (1937) on The

- Embarcadero
- S & S Grocery* (1959) at 1461 Grant Avenue
- The Saloon* (1861) at 1232 Grant Avenue
- Savoy Tivoli* (1907) at 1434 Grant Avenue
- Sodini's Green Valley Restaurant* (1906) at 510 Green Street
- Specs' Twelve Adler Museum Cafe* (1968) at 12 Saroyan Place
- Tommaso's Restaurant* (1935) at 1042 Kearny Street
- Tony Nik's* (1933) at 1534 Stockton Street
- Tosca Cafe* (1919) 242 Columbus Avenue
- Vesuvio Cafe* (1948) at 255 Columbus Avenue
- Yuet Lee Restaurant* (1977) at 1300-08 Stockton Street

- Pending Nominations to the Legacy Business Register:**
- Bimbo's 365 Club* (1931) at 1025 Columbus Avenue
  - Café Jacqueline* (1979) at 1454 Grant Avenue
  - The Condor Club* (1958) at 560 Broadway
  - Fior d'Italia*, (1886) at 2237 Mason Street, formerly at 601 Union Street
  - Grafteo* (1935) at 735 Columbus Avenue
  - Il Pollaio* (1984) at 555 Columbus Avenue
  - Little City Market* (1940) at 1400 Stockton Street, formerly on Green Street
  - Molinari Delicatessen* (1896) at 373 Columbus Avenue
  - Old Ship Saloon* (1851) at 298 Pacific Avenue



Café Jacqueline at 1454 Grant. Jacqueline Margulish has been whipping up her soufflés since 1969. © DENNIS HEARNE



Liguria Bakery at 1700 Stockton has been owned and operated by the same family since 1911. © JUDITH POWELL



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# R.I.P. HERMON BAKER, NORTH BEACH'S BEAD POET

by Romalyn Schmaltz  
romalyn.schmaltz@thd.org

It was one of the first places I stepped into when I moved to Telegraph Hill in the summer of 2006. Yone, the unassuming little bead store at 478 Union Street, was on my new footpath home, and when I stopped in that first afternoon, surrounded by old, historically significant and antique beads galore, time really did stand still.

It wasn't just the merchandise that felt frozen in amber—Hermon Baker, the proprietor, moved at his own peacefully glacial pace, considered each bead individually, and engaged the two or three other customers



Supervisor Aaron Peskin and THD board member Romalyn Schmaltz present Hermon with his Heritage of the Hill award in December, 2015.

© JAMES CHA.JPG

in the shop and me in quiet yet immersive conversation about everything from art to poetry to ancient Japanese culture. Through Hermon, we strangers there began to chat among ourselves in library whispers. An hour went by, and I'd barely even thought about jewelry per se.

It was a quintessential North Beach moment to find the poetry of community among ten thousand beads, each of which was regarded as its own work of art meant to be incorporated into a more complex piece—much like each word in a poem is its own polished whole, yet finds its larger music when strung together with other carefully curated words.

Hermon Jenkins Baker was born a world away from North Beach, however, in Flint, Michigan on April 10, 1923 and passed away at the age of 97 on August 9, 2020. After attending Simpson College in Ontario, Canada, Hermon was inducted into the U.S. Army in 1943 and sent to the European theater of World War II in May of '44. That November he was injured in the

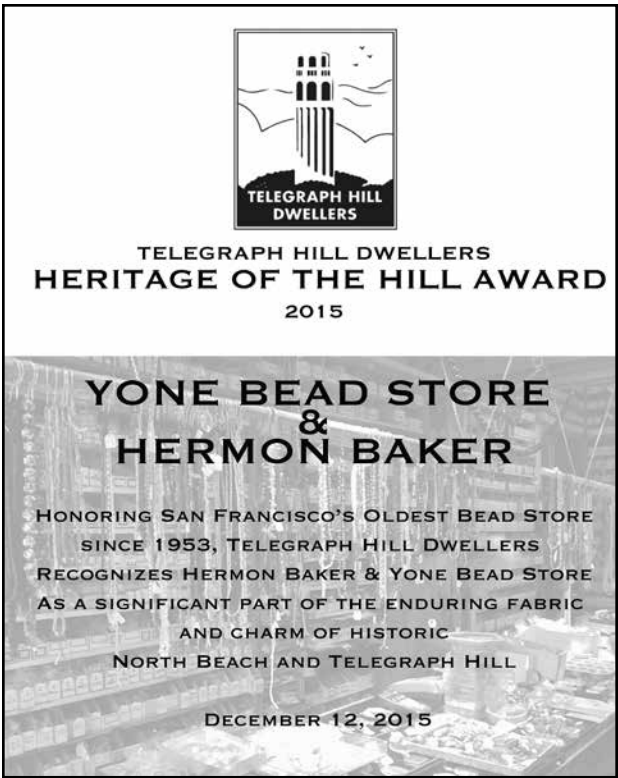
Hürtgen Forest battle and received a Purple Heart. After his recovery, Hermon attended the University of Michigan, earning a Bachelor of Design degree from the School of Architecture and Design there.

After living briefly in British Columbia, Mexico City, and Monterey, Hermon alighted in San Francisco and established Yone (originally called Sueko, which opened in 1953) in 1960 with his lifelong partner, Yone Arashiro, who was a fashion designer and artist himself. Hermon and gallery Yone became a perhaps-unlikely epicenter for a variety of Bay Area artists, from Ruth Asawa to Imogen Cunningham to Janis Joplin—in fact, Yone designed the dress Asawa wore to her opening reception at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the couple recounted fond memories of dressing up Joplin in “love beads.”


Although Yone Arashiro passed away in 1993, Hermon continued on with their labor of love on Union Street (in what is now Igneous Theory, a gallery of geological art). In 2013, he was joined by artist and architect Sandra Fish, who was attracted to the quiet poetry of beads as a form of physical and emotional art therapy. She partnered with Hermon to bring the shop “into the 21st century” online and offered beading workshops in the nearby Dante Building.

In 2015, Yone closed its doors and went officially online. Nevertheless, we were treated to five more years of seeing Hermon around the neighborhood, buying groceries or strolling through the fog in the park. In December 2015, the Telegraph Hill Dwellers awarded Hermon with its Heritage of the Hill Award at our annual holiday party at Original Joe's. “Hermon was quintessential North Beach: lovely, kind, creative, and quirky in the best way. He and his internationally renowned bead shop will be missed,” observed District Three Supervisor Aaron Peskin, a longtime friend.


Hermon was a deep and enduring member of our intimate community—a gleaming, polished center jewel in the ever-expanding strand of beads that are the colorful folks of North Beach and Telegraph Hill. ♦



Hermon's 2015 Heritage of the Hill award presented by THD.



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# NORTH BEACH THEN AND NOW

Photo Essay curated by Sarah Kliban and David Lipkin

The vintage photographs featured in this spread were graciously provided by OpenSFHistory. We are most appreciative.

OpenSFHistory is a program launched by Western Neighborhoods Project in 2014 to rehouse, digitize, and make available online thousands of San Francisco historical images from one private collector. Since that time, the program has grown to include other significant collections from partner organizations, like the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and SCRAP. Images span all of San Francisco, ranging from the 1850s through the early 2000s.

Every image you see on *OpenSFHistory.org* has been lovingly identified and cataloged by a small army of dedicated volunteers. Whenever possible, entries are mapped so you can explore the city by location—perfect for seeing what your neighborhood looked like 25, 75, or 100 years ago. You might even find your house! And this year, in response to the isolation of the pandemic, OpenSFHistory launched the Guerrilla Historian project that transformed more than 50,000 images from the website into printable posters. Perhaps you’ve seen them taped onto telephone poles? Anyone can become a Guerrilla Historian. All you have to do is hit ‘print’ and go for a walk. Please visit the website: <https://opensfhistory.org>. We will publish more of their photos as part of a continuation of this photo essay in the next issue of the Semaphore. ♦♦



TOP: Broadway and Montgomery (1910s)—View to NW corner of Broadway and Montgomery and Hotel Golden Eagle Building. Barber and bar on ground floor. Roma Hotel next door.  
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN  
BOTTOM: Broadway and Montgomery today.  
© DAVID LIPKIN



TOP: Chestnut and Stockton (1915)—Looking west down Chestnut below Stockton.  
© DPW HORACE CHAFFEE  
BOTTOM: Chestnut and Stockton today.  
© SARAH KLIBAN



TOP: Columbus and Grant (circa 1941)—Looking north—showing E Line #356 and St. Francis of Assisi Church.  
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN  
BOTTOM: Columbus and Grant today.  
© DAVID LIPKIN



TOP: Columbus and Pacific (1955)—View east to International Settlement entrance. Arabian Nights, Barbary Coast, McHales, U.S. Appraisers Stores and Immigration Station to the right.  
PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN  
BOTTOM: Columbus and Pacific today.  
© SARAH KLIBAN





TOP: Columbus and Mason (1919)—Looking north down Columbus at Mason. Hotel Buona Vista at right (site of North Beach Library).  
 BOTTOM: Columbus and Mason today.

© DPW HORACE CHAFFEE  
 © SARAH KLIBAN



TOP: Columbus and Montgomery (1880)—Looking north up Columbus from Montgomery. Cable cars and horsecar.  
 BOTTOM: Columbus and Montgomery today

PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN  
 © DAVID LIPKIN



TOP: Kearny and Broadway (1870)—View south on Kearny at Broadway to busy street scene with horsecars and pedestrians. Old St. Mary's Church steeple in distance on right.  
 BOTTOM: Kearny and Broadway today

© CARLETON WATKINS  
 © SARAH KLIBAN



TOP: Kearny and Columbus (1910)—Looking south down Kearny from Columbus and Pacific. Sentinel Building aka Abe Ruef Building aka Columbus Tower. Calegaris Pharmacy on left.  
 BOTTOM: Kearny and Columbus today

COURTESY M. BEHRMAN COLLECTION  
 © DAVID LIPKIN



# NORTH BEACH FIRST FRIDAYS RIDES AGAIN—THIS TIME IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET

by Romalyn Schmaltz  
romalyn.firstfridays@gmail.com

When I agreed to take over coordination of North Beach First Fridays in February of this year from the mighty Kim Larson of Modern Eden Gallery (now relocated to the Polk Street area), I had no way of knowing the world as we know it was about to shut down. Many artists I knew had the instant fierceness and resiliency artists tend to be known for, straightaway beginning to hold art salons and drawing and painting studios on Zoom and other platforms, but the question remained: How do we offer an art walk when we're not supposed to leave our homes?

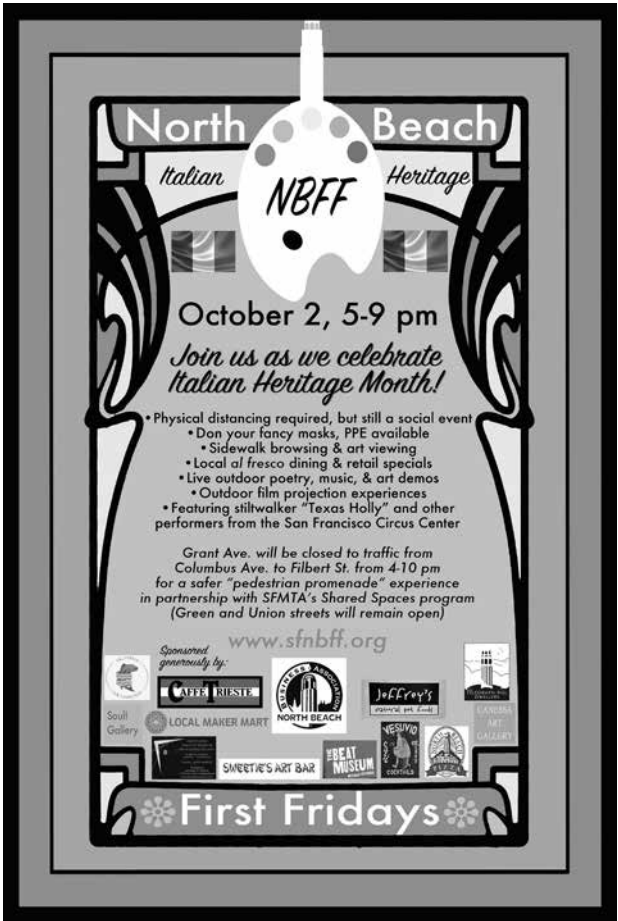
## History of North Beach First Fridays

The North Beach First Fridays gallery art walk was first conceived in 2007, based upon an idea Emma Macchiarini—daughter of my project partner Danny Macchiarini (owner of Macchiarini Creative Design and president of the North Beach Business Association)—had after they'd visited a First Tuesdays downtown art walk event that featured a lot of supposedly “upscale” artworks and galleries. “My daughter looked at me and said, ‘Gee Dad, I’m sure glad you and I do art!’” explained Danny. Emma went on to suggest that, since Tuesdays are typically dead evenings in North Beach, that they instead shoot for a more lively—and alliterative—First Fridays. And so, we were born.

While other cities’ subsequent First Fridays events (such as Oakland’s, Reno’s, and Las Vegas’s) benefited from their respective cities’ government funding, however, North Beach First Fridays was dependent solely upon sponsorships and donations, limiting its scope and range to a bare-bones, DIY operation. This changed last year when the Office of Supervisor Aaron Peskin stepped in to help us apply for funding through a San Francisco Arts Commission grant. The grant was approved early in 2020 and then...COVID-19.

## Getting Creative

From March until June of 2020, as you know, the physical world was completely on hold in San Francisco. Streets were empty, and morale was pretty low, with everything from health to the economy a dark, looming question mark. But as businesses slowly began to open up more, and social distancing gingerly began to replace shelter-in-place orders, the opportunity presented itself: the streets!



Poster for the October NBFF, emphasizing Italian Heritage Month. POSTER BY ROMALYN SCHMALTZ



Super-volunteer Matthew Protacio helps the information Station on Green Street, offering masks, hand sanitizer, and directions. © MARKELLE PALOMBO

At the same time, businesses such as restaurants and retailers were desperately hurting and struggling just to survive, and it made sense to include them in the philosophy and programming of North Beach First Fridays, expanding it to include all our neighbors who wished to participate. Thanks to the San Francisco Shared Spaces program, we were able to secure permits through San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency to close portions of Grant Avenue, Green Street, and Kerouac Alley to thru-traffic, barricading intersections for the night and allowing patrons to feel safe checking out art, food, and retail and socializing while not compromising their health.

## Showtime

While we had a “soft opening” in August, our first Shared Streets North Beach First Fridays took place with great success on September 4, 2020. We were able to achieve some incredible things with the help of a vast network of volunteers from an almost-unheard-of coalition of North Beach neighborhood associations, including North Beach Citizens (thank you, Kristie Fairchild and your wonderful crew!), North Beach Neighbors, the North Beach Business Association and, of course, the Telegraph Hill Dwellers. An outpouring of other unaffiliated volunteers rounded out our hastily assembled team. (We got the permit four days before the event!) And we gave it the old freshman try.

Feedback from attendees warmed my socially starved heart that night. “I’ve been in my apartment alone for almost six months,” one person told me while enjoying dinner and a beer at Tupelo. “It’s been so hard, but it was too scary to risk going out, even when restaurants and stores did open up. With about 20 extra feet [across the street] to spread out in, I can finally see some of the people I love and miss most, all while having a weekend night out that finally feels like a weekend night out, supporting local businesses, and catching up on what our artists have been up to for the last half-year.”

In addition to being shown in such galleries as Elizabeth Ashcroft’s phoenix-from-the-ashes Live Worms on Grant—which opened in late August to a salon show of some 40 local artists straight out of lockdown—art took the form of video, live music, fashion, and food. The San Francisco Circus Center’s stilt walker Texas Holly ambled through the streets dressed as a nurse, playfully reminding people to mask up and physically distance themselves. Live music rang from outside of Caffè Trieste, Tupelo, Maggie McGarry’s, Al’s Attire, Fluteworld, Belle Cora, and Gregory Castellano’s Local Maker Mart. People danced in the streets, giving “virtual hugs” and feeling freer than they could remember—free to be safe and alive in public, all brought to you by the letters ‘A,’ ‘R,’ and ‘T’ (and a lot of elbow bumps and elbow grease, to be sure).

Our roster for October includes all the above—and adds more retail, more restaurants, unicyclists, jugglers, film projections, and a poetry show curated by longtime literary event planner Jessica Loos. (Since it will have



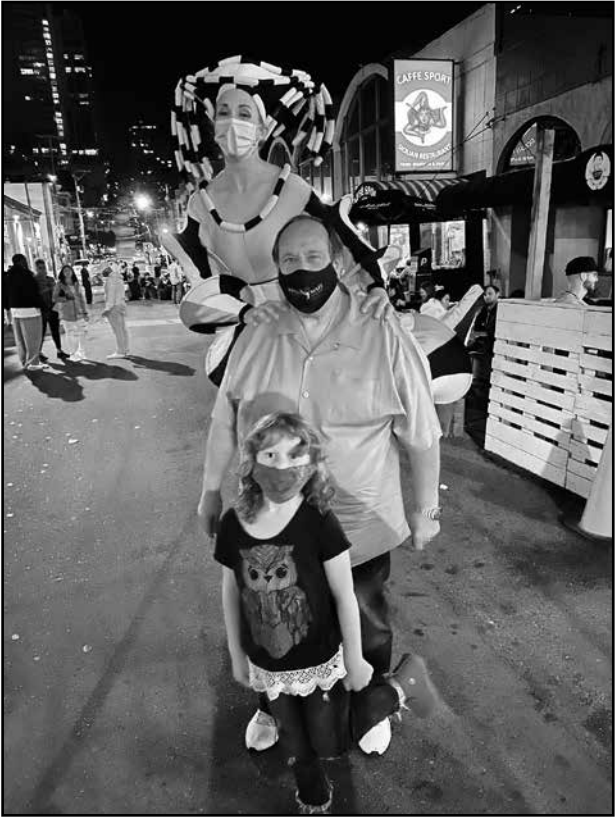
Lee Hepner and Sunny Angelo clowning with Texas. Right-hand man and left-hand woman to Supervisor Peskin (who helped NBBA get a grant and permit for First Fridays). © DAN MACCHIARINI

taken place before this issue is published, I’d love to hear from those of you who attended.)

## Get Involved!

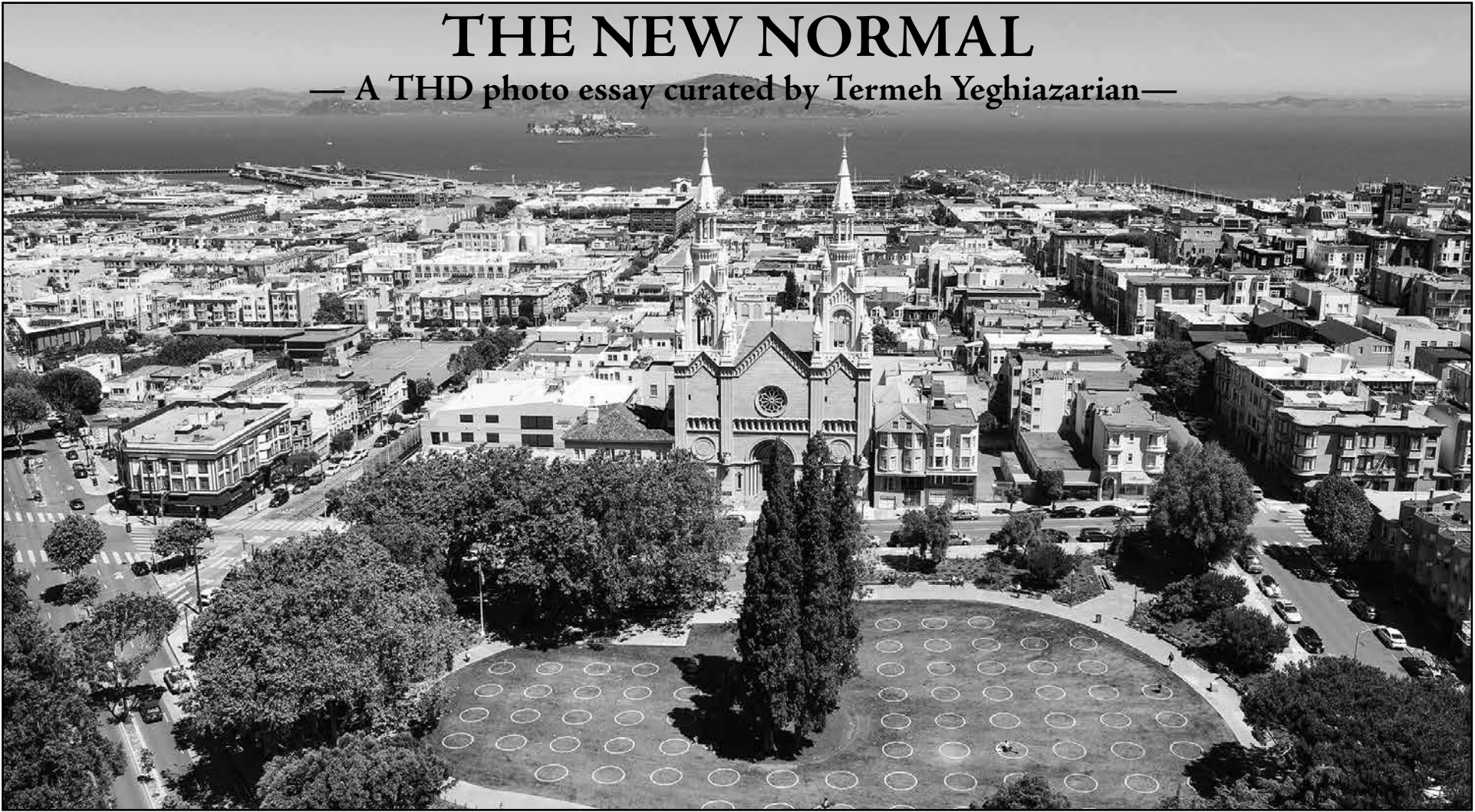
North Beach First Fridays is actively recruiting artists, visionaries, and volunteers. Getting involved is as easy as dropping me an email ([romalyn.firstfridays@gmail.com](mailto:romalyn.firstfridays@gmail.com)) and letting me know what you’d like to see, do, or be in this ongoing celebration of North Beach’s art, culture, dining, retail, and social milieu. We are open to ever-expanding definitions of art, no matter how challenging the times. Art always leads change, and it is the very personification of adaptability—a term we’ve all come to know well, both when we were forced apart and now as we come back together. My heart goes out to everyone who cares enough to take part. Thank you.

Check out the new North Beach First Fridays website at [www.sfnbfff.org](http://www.sfnbfff.org). Again, please use the email [romalyn.firstfridays@gmail.com](mailto:romalyn.firstfridays@gmail.com) for correspondence related to North Beach First Fridays.



Costume change and now our North Beach Court Jester handing out free face masks on Green Street! Rich Azzolino of Sotto Mare with Dan Macchiarini's granddaughter Hanna (7) who can't resist a photo op ever! © DAN MACCHIARINI





Aerial view of social distancing in Washington Square Park. © CHRISTOPHER MICHEL

RED SKY DAY—SEPTEMBER 9, 2020



Noon on red sky day, Kramer Alley off Greenwich. © JUDY IRVING



Empty Stockton bus on red sky day. © TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



Amen! Curbside midday mass at Saint Francis Church on Vallejo. © TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



Noon on red sky day, Green at Grant. © TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



Morning coffee on red sky day. © TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



Midday Mass, Saint Francis of Assisi on Vallejo. © TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



# ART AND GRAFFITI



COVID-19 brings new artwork to North Beach.

© DAVID LIPKIN



(right) Artist Darrell Allen Caraway at his easel, painting en plein air on-site in Kerouac Alley.

© REBECCA PETERS



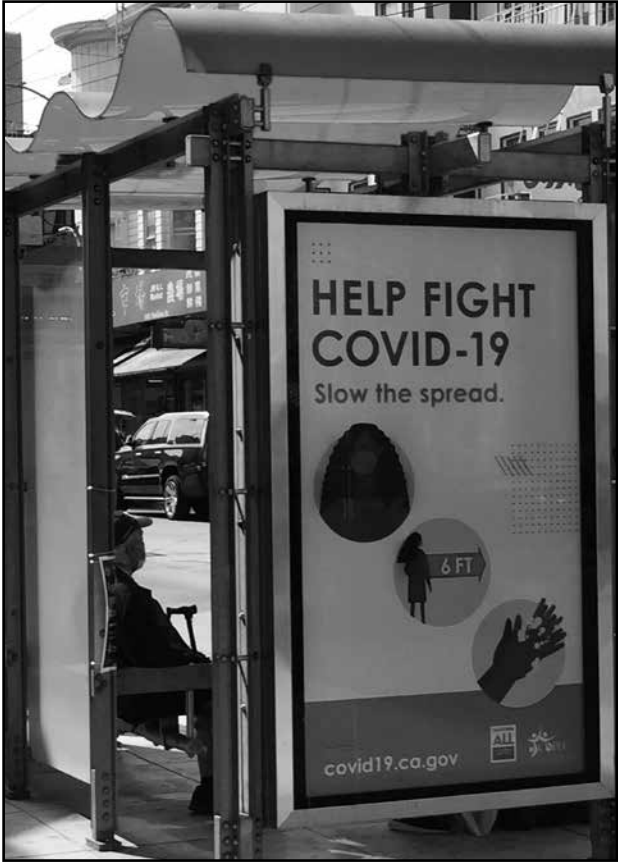
North Beach Restaurant, Stockton at Columbus.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN

# SIGNS OF THE TIMES



Quarantine Social Distancing Stay Home Festival 2020 poster designed by Deichmonster



Bus stop on Stockton.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



City Lights Bookstore.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



## SIGNS OF THE TIMES



S&S Grocery on Grant.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN



North Beach Strong. Billboard looming over Washington Square Park during the pandemic.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN

## OPEN FOR BUSINESS



Blues Power brings the music out on the street.

© PAUL MAEDJE



Watching the game at Tupelo on Grant.

© TERMEH YEGHIAZARIAN

## AROUND CAFFÈ TRIESTE



Social distancing patrons on reopening day at Caffè Trieste.

© PAUL MAEDJE



And the band plays on at Caffè Trieste.

© PAUL MAEDJE



(left) In lieu of outdoor seating, long-time Cafe Trieste patron brings his own chair to reestablish the morning routine.

© PAUL MAEDJE



(right) Danny Macchiarini addresses the crowd at Caffè Trieste.

© MARKELLE PALOMBO



## ART & CULTURE REPORT

by Romalyn Schmaltz, Committee Chair  
romalyn.schmaltz@thd.org

For ongoing art and culture events, both in-person and virtual, please check out Live Worms Gallery and City Lights Bookstore, among other venues.







## TRANSPORTATION REPORT

By Howard Wong, Committee Co-Chair  
howard.wong@thd.org

On August 22, Muni Metro light-rail trains returned to service, and the system collapsed after only three days—due to failure of metal splice connectors at overhead power lines and a Covid-19 case at the Muni Control Center. Apparently, sub-standard metal and improper testing will shut down the Metro system until 2021.

Without higher-capacity trains, buses will be more crowded and less safe during the pandemic, exacerbating Muni's dire revenue downturn. Thirty-seven operators have already tested positive for the coronavirus, having found it increasingly difficult to limit ridership to 20-30 passengers per bus. The Transit Workers Union is pushing for more frequent buses and surface light rail service, as well as restoration of the recently cut BackFirst Wellness Program, which provided health interventions for more than 5,000 Muni operators. Temporary transit-only lanes are being prioritized to increase transit reliability, particularly on Geary Boulevard. Optimizing limited resources, Muni service frequency will gradually increase to meet trip needs, to minimize health risks for employees and the public and to support economic recovery.

### MUNI CORE SERVICE WITH SOME EXPANSIONS

Core service consists of 34 bus lines out of the pre-

viously operating 68 lines in the Muni system. Cable cars will be shut down for the foreseeable future. The Core Service Plan keeps 90% of residents within one mile of a bus stop, focusing on essential trips especially for transit-dependent and low-income people. Low-cost supplemental programs include Paratransit, Rides for Seniors/Disabled, Essential Workers Ride Home, and Shop-a-Round. The 30-Stockton bus (10-20-minute headways) will temporarily extend service to Marina Green, Crissy Field, and the Sports Basement from 6 a.m.- 8 p.m. daily—otherwise terminating at Divisadero & Chestnut in the Marina District. The 49-Van Ness/Mission (10-min headways) was extended from Van Ness to Fisherman's Wharf/Pier 39. In the northeast quadrant, other bus lines are the 1-California (10-min), 8-Bayshore (10-min), 12-Folsom/Pacific (10-15-min), 19-Polk (15-20-min), and 45-Union/Stockton (10-20-min).

### SHARED SPACES, SLOW STREETS, AND CAR FREE ZONES

The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority is gradually expanding routes prioritized for pedestrians and bicycles, which facilitate shared-street spaces for small businesses. By example, a bike route now extends from the Ferry Building to the ocean, via a car-free Market Street, up the Page Street hill, through Golden Gate Park's newly expanded network, and as far as the San Francisco Zoo. In North Beach, a strategically located pedestrian street is Lombard at Joe DiMaggio Playground. To help struggling businesses

even further, permit fee waivers are being considered for outdoor tables and chairs, sidewalk merchandise displays, and parklets through April 2022. More than half of San Francisco storefronts—1,300 out of 2,500 businesses—have closed permanently in the last six months. Lost parking spaces are a concern for some businesses and residents, including those who rely on pickup/deliveries and those without residential garages. Neighborhood parking management would provide a more holistic streetscape.

### FUTURE TRENDS

Work-at-home patterns might become institutionalized. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission has approved a long-term vision requiring large employers to have at least 60% of employees telecommuting—with an eye to curbing greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion by 2035. By example, Salesforce and Facebook are giving employees the option to work at home for the rest of the year. Twitter has told employees they could telecommute indefinitely. Meanwhile, the San Francisco County Transportation Authority is holding workshops for a Congestion Pricing Study—to consider charging fees for cars driving in the City's northeast quadrant during peak hours. Although this would be a regressive tax, congestion-pricing in cities like London and Stockholm have reduced car traffic by 15%, while gaining new funding for transportation improvements. Telegraph Hill Dwellers will be scrutinizing cost-benefits and equity issues for any driving fees.



## MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT REPORT

by Nick Ferris, Committee Chair  
nick.ferris@thd.org

What a year this has been! THD has always enjoyed and depended on in-person meetings and gatherings with its membership. With COVID-19, the world has become familiar with online video conferencing, and our events, too, have shifted online with the creation of THD's Virtual Event Series.

We've been hosting monthly talks by San Francisco citizens of varied backgrounds. Beginning with an interview of David Talbot by Rose Aguilar, we learned about his new book, *Between Heaven and Hell*, discussing the story of his stroke and path to today. The event was so well-attended, we continued the series and since have held conversations between Supervisor Aaron Peskin and Joe Eskenazi of *Mission Local* and former Assemblymember and Supervisor Tom Ammiano talking with Tim Redmond of *48Hills*. All events were held at 5:30 p.m. during the week, consistently garnering 80+ attendees.

On September 23, we held our largest event, the District 3 Supervisor debate, which had 538 "screens" attending and presumably more people as often there are multiple folks behind the same screen. We were fortunate to have Trisha Thadani, the City Hall Reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle* moderating the debate. If you missed it, you can find it on THD's Facebook page and also at [thd.org](http://thd.org).

We're looking for new members to join our committee and brainstorm ideas for future events. If you'd like to get involved, we'd love to have you! Member Engagement meetings are held once per month online via Zoom. Reach out to me at [nick.ferris@thd.org](mailto:nick.ferris@thd.org) to get plugged in.



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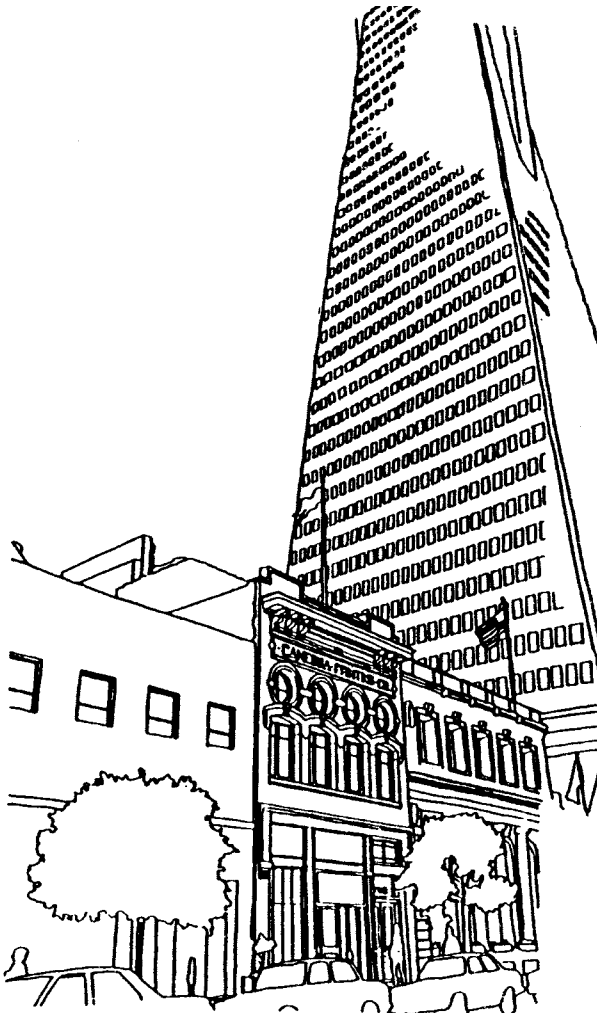


# TREASURER'S REPORT

by Nick Ferris, Treasurer  
nick.ferris@thd.org

THD is halfway through its fiscal year and remains in a strong financial position with a net income of \$2,680.30, ahead of budget. As a result, we've been able to make donations to community organizations needing support, such as Italian Community Services, First Fridays, and North Beach Citizens. Looking at the second half of the year, I expect our budget to even out.

We're always thinking of more and better ways to support our neighborhood, particularly during this pandemic. If you have suggestions or ideas on ways THD can make this neighborhood better for you and others, the best way to get in contact is via email at [nick.ferris@thd.org](mailto:nick.ferris@thd.org).



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## THD COMMITTEES NEED YOU

Get involved in our neighborhood and make a difference! Join a THD committee and help keep the Hill a special place to live.

### STANDING COMMITTEES

- Art & Culture: Romalyn Schmaltz [romalyn.schmaltz@thd.org](mailto:romalyn.schmaltz@thd.org)
- Budget: Nick Ferris [nick.ferris@thd.org](mailto:nick.ferris@thd.org)
- Membership: Andy Katz [THDmembership@gmail.com](mailto:THDmembership@gmail.com)
- Oral History Project: Judy Irving [judy.irving@thd.org](mailto:judy.irving@thd.org)
- Transportation: Howard Wong and Joey Babbitt  
[howard.wong@thd.org](mailto:howard.wong@thd.org) and [joey.babbitt@thd.org](mailto:joey.babbitt@thd.org)
- Parks & Trees: Don Raichle [don.raichle@thd.org](mailto:don.raichle@thd.org)
- Planning & Zoning: Mary Lipian and Nancy Shanahan  
[mary.lipian@thd.org](mailto:mary.lipian@thd.org) and [nancy.shanahan@thd.org](mailto:nancy.shanahan@thd.org)
- Semaphore*: Cap Caplan (Editor) [cap.caplan@thd.org](mailto:cap.caplan@thd.org)  
David Lipkin (Photo Editor) [david.lipkin@thd.org](mailto:david.lipkin@thd.org)
- Social & Program: Rachel Rodriguez and Patrice Ignacio Moll  
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- Waterfront: Jon Golinger [jon.golinger@thd.org](mailto:jon.golinger@thd.org)
- Communications: Al Fontes, Katie Hopkins, Leah Lovelace, Sarah Kliban  
[al.fontes@thd.org](mailto:al.fontes@thd.org)

PLANNING & ZONING COMMITTEE MEETS last Thursdays of each month. Call for time and location.  
986-7070 or 563-3494 or 391-5652.

### LIAISONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

- Central Police District Community Advisory Board: Daryl Babbitt
- Coalition for San Francisco Neighborhoods: Al Fontes
- Friends of Washington Square Liaison: Don Raichle
- Northeast Waterfront Advisory Group Member: Jon Golinger



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Join the Telegraph Hill Dwellers!  
Go to [thd.org](http://thd.org) and become part of this active community!



## TELEGRAPH HILL DWELLERS

Voice Mail: (415) 843-1011. Web Site: [www.thd.org](http://www.thd.org)  
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- Vice-President: Nancy Shanahan — [nancy.shanahan@thd.org](mailto:nancy.shanahan@thd.org)
- Recording Secretary: Mary Lipian — [mary.lipian@thd.org](mailto:mary.lipian@thd.org)
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- Financial Secretary: Andy Katz — [andy.katz@thd.org](mailto:andy.katz@thd.org)
- Historian: Al Fontes — [al.fontes@thd.org](mailto:al.fontes@thd.org)
- Immediate Past President: Judy Irving — [judy.irving@thd.org](mailto:judy.irving@thd.org)
- Editor of *The Semaphore*: Cap Caplan — [cap.caplan@thd.org](mailto:cap.caplan@thd.org)

### DIRECTORS

#### Term: 2019-2021

- Romalyn Schmaltz
- Patrice Ignacio Moll
- Rachel Rodriguez
- Sarah Kliban

#### Term: 2018-2020

- Leah Lovelace
- Don Raichle
- Julia Martin Murphy
- Termeh Yeghiazarian



## WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS!

**There's no better way to be connected to your neighborhood and be a voice of the hill than by joining Telegraph Hill Dwellers, today.**

Join at [THD.org](http://THD.org). If you'd prefer to have a brochure and sign-up form mailed to you, please send an email to [membership@thd.org](mailto:membership@thd.org). Already a member? Give one as a gift!

### Membership includes:

- A one-year subscription to news & events via email and a quarterly paper, *The Semaphore*.
- Opportunities to be active in your community. Your passion likely aligns to one of many committees.
- Social and Art & Culture events throughout the year – attend and contribute!

### Annual Dues:

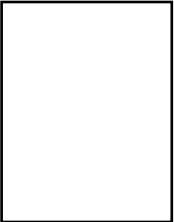
Individuals.....	\$35
Households.....	\$50
Seniors (65 and older).....	\$25
Senior Households.....	\$40

Join now or give the gift of membership at [THD.org](http://THD.org) or email [membership@thd.org](mailto:membership@thd.org).





TELEGRAPH HILL DWELLERS  
P.O. Box 330159  
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94133



# THE SEMAPHORE

#231 Fall 2020

## FEATURES and COLUMNS

Kid's Corner by Sarah Kilban	1	North Beach Then and Now, Photo Essay curated by Sarah Kilban and David Lipkin	8
President's Corner by Stan Hayes	2	North Beach First Fridays Rides Again—This Time In The Middle Of The Street by Romalyn Schmaltz	10
Parks & Trees Report: The Continuing Evolution of Pioneer Park by Dan Raichle	3	The New Normal, A THD Photo Essay curated by Terneh Yeghiazarian	11
District 3 Supervisor's Report by Aaron Peskin	4	Art & Culture Report by Romalyn Schmaltz	13
O Brother, Where Art Thou? by Mark Bittner	5	Transportation Report by Howard Wong	14
Honoring Our North Beach Legacy Businesses by Nancy Shanahan	6	Membership Engagement Report by Nick Ferris	14
R.I.P. Hermon Baker, North Beach's Bead Poet by Romalyn Schmaltz	7	Treasurer's Report by Nick Ferris	15

## THD BUSINESS

Treasurer's Report	15	Board of Directors and Committees	15
		Become a Member	15

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